(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government will ban lotteries directly run by State Governments;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether the State of Kerala opposed any such move?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I. D. SWAMI): (a) to (e) The Lotteries (Prohibition) Bill, 1999, which seeks to prohibit the organization, conduct and promotion of lotteries falling under entry 40 of List I — Union List of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India, has already been introduced in the Rajya Sabha.

Kerala and some other States have opposed the proposed ban on lotteries. The Central Government perceives lotteries as a social evil which needs to be eliminated.

Deterioration of law and order in North-East

2162. SHRI ONWARD L. NONGTDU: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the law and order situation in the North-Eastern region is deteriorating;

(b) if so, the reasons therefore and the reaction of Government thereto;

(c) the effective measures being taken or proposed to be taken by Government to control and improve the law and order situation in the NER;

(d) whether Government are aware of the present activities of ANVC and NSCN in the West Khasi Hills district and East Garo Hills district of Meghalaya; and

(e) if so, what steps Government propose to take action immediately against anti-social elements?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Steps taken by the Government to combat militancy in the North East include, interalia, deployment of Central Para Military Force and Army; improved coordination and sharing of intelligence between the security forces; modernisation/upgradation of State Police forces; reimbursement of security related expenditure; sanction of Special Central Assistance to the State Governments; declaration of the most seriously affected areas as "disturbed areas' and notification of the major insurgent groups as unlawful associations'. The situation is also kept under watch and is reviewed from time to time for taking appropriate action. Government is committed to restoration of peace and has extended an invitation to all those who have strayed from the paths of togetherness to come forward for talks within the four corners of our Constitution.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. Two Battalions of CPMF have been deployed in the State to assist the State Police to tackle the criminal activities of various groups, including ANVC and NSCN, in Meghalaya. The State Government have also been directed to take stringent action against all such criminal elements.

Arrest of foreign ladies at Thiruvananthapuram Airport

2163. SHRI SATISHCHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware about the arrest of eight Non- Indian girls at Thiruvananthapuram airport while producing fake papers;

(b) whether it is a fact that they ran away from Abala Mandiram of Pujapura;

(c) whether any investigation has been made; and

(d) if so, what are the findings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CH. VIDYASAGAR RAO): (a) to (d) As per available information, on 09-11-1999, eight foreign women arrived at Thiruvananthapuram Airport from Istanbul as deportees holding forged Japanese passports, and were arrested and a case was registered against them by the State Police. They escaped from Government Mahila Mandiram on 26-12-1999 but were located and detained by the Police in Thirunalveli District, Tamil Nadu on the same day. Again a case was registered and they were produced before the Court in Thiruvananthapuram which remanded them to judicial custody.